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ABSTRACT

The Dubuque, Iowa Community School District uses a point system to pay administrators. The evaluation of contract length, professional training, administrative experience, administrative responsibilities, and performance generate point totals that correspond to dollar values. The appraisal procedure uses management-by-objective concepts and self-evaluation. Problems arise in determining administrator responsibility, fitting in administrators who were in the district before the merit schedule began, and overcoming individual psychological resistance to performance evaluation. (DW)

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DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
1500 Locust Street
Dubuque, Iowa

Summary of the Development and Four-Year Operation of an Administrative Salary System which Includes Performance Appraisal

Dubuque Community School District
Population - City of Dubuque, 65,000
Rural Population, 15,000
Student Enrollment - 13,500
Area in School District, 245 sq. mi.
No. of Employees - 725 Certificated
625 Supportive

Garlyn H. Wessel
Superintendent of Schools

EA 006 828

July, 1973

During the 1969-70 school year, discussion was undertaken regarding a system for determining administrative salaries which included performance appraisal. The topic was prompted by the administrative staff volunteering during the 1968-69 salary discussions to enter into some form of merit pay. A committee of representatives from each administrative classification was formed to study and develop the system which we prefer to call "performance appraisal" rather than the abused term "merit pay." The performance appraisal system has been in effect for four years although the procedure for appraising performance was not fully developed for the 1970-71 contract-year salaries. We consider that the system will be in a developmental stage for several more years. A committee of administrators continues in existence for the purpose of analyzing and reviewing all facets of the performance system.

How It Works

The system is outlined on pages 12 and 13. They show that five factors are considered in determining the annual salary of an administrator of which performance is only one. Each of the five factors is converted to a point value and in turn each point is worth a given number of dollars. The dollar value of the point is adjusted each year during salary deliberations. Individual salaries are calculated by totaling the points for each of the five factors and multiplying the sum by the point dollar value.

The five factors are in no way mathematically related to the teachers salary schedule. Of course, there is an indirect relationship between the increase in the teachers salary schedule and the dollar value of the performance system point. Otherwise, one classification of personnel would fall behind the other in general salary relationships.

The poinc value was determined differently each of the first two years the system was in effect. For the first year it was determined through the usual procedure followed in Dubuque for setting the general level of administrative salary increases. This involves a committee of administrators discussing salary considerations with the superintendent who then makes a recommendation to the board of education. In the case of the administrators included in performance appraisal, the recommendation includes the dollar value of the point and fringe benefits.

For the 1971-72 contract year, the Iowa Legislature imposed a tax-freeze on all Iowa school districts which permitted only a cost-of-living increase for the entire Dubuque staff. We, therefore, calculated the total dollars available for administrative salary increases as a result of the tax-freeze and the total number of points for all performance administrators. By dividing the dollars available by the total points we "forced" the point dollar value and then distributed the salary increases according to the formula. While open salary discussions would be preferred, the "reverse" procedure did operate satisfactorily under the imposed tax-freeze.

Adopting the New Salary System

Factors - The committee of administrators first determined which factors were to be included in the new system. Agreeing on which factors were to be included did not prove too difficult but determining the manner in which some of the factors were to be applied proved to be more difficult.

The administrative committee arrived at a consensus early in the discussions that professional training and experience should be minimized from that of the traditional teacher salary schedule. It was felt that in selecting a person to fill an administrative position, his or her ability, for the most

part, had been identified and therefore a minimum period of three years was sufficient to fully "grow" into his or her administrative responsibilities. In terms of professional training, the large majority of administrators felt that performance is more significant than mere possession of an advanced degree. Thus, a minimal increment was included for the purpose of providing incentive to remain alert to changing conditions through formal education. For those few who did not possess the M.A. degree, considered to be basic, a strong incentive to earn the degree was provided through deducting a significant number of points. However, if certification standards do not require an M.A. degree, there is no mandate that it be obtained. A high performer who holds no advanced degree can be financially rewarded through the system of performance appraisal. There are specific examples of this in Dubuque.

The factor which posed the greatest hurdle in achieving consensus was the point-spread among the several administrative positions for administrative responsibility. It was difficult for the total group to view only responsibility associated with the position and ignore the qualities of the person filling the position. Personal feelings toward a chosen field to which a person had dedicated many years of training and effort were difficult to overcome. Responsibility was equated with "importance" and the feeling was that a position which had a lower responsibility factor was less important in the administrative structure. Personal biases simply could not be overcome to the point where total agreement could be reached and after two attempts to determine the interrelationships of responsibility objectively, the entire group agreed that the central office staff should make the determination. With a few minor adjustments over the years, the group accepted what appears on page 12, Factor V. However, the difference in point values among the

various positions for administrative responsibility still remains as a major source of discontent with the performance appraisal system. No solution has been found as to how the degree of responsibility associated with an administrative position can be objectively determined.

The performance appraisal points were established in intervals of three because it was felt that measurement procedures were not sufficiently sophisticated to permit finer gradation. Currently there is feeling within the performance group that an intermediate step should be scheduled but that it should be applied only when there is a question on the part of the evaluators as to whether performance has improved sufficiently to merit a three-point advancement. From a standpoint of morale this would be sound. It has proved to be very disappointing for those who have improved but yet receive no advancement on performance because of the degree of improvement.

Administrators who are new to a position, whether it is a transfer from within the system or from outside the system, are placed at a performance ranking of nine (9) points. From there they can move upward or downward. The nine points has also been used in another capacity; to compare salaries with similar positions in other school districts.

During the second year of the performance appraisal system, the performance administrators asked for clarification on the manner by which inter-school salary comparisons would be determined. The underlying philosophy of the performance system is that an administrator considered to be an above-average performer should receive a salary above the average of other school districts. The performance system was to promote this result for Dubuque administrators. In response to the question posed by the administrators, the board of education determined that the setting of the value of the point each year should be based

on comparing salaries for similar positions in other Iowa school districts which did not have performance-based salary systems. Such comparisons include only nine performance points for Dubuque administrators. In other words, it was felt that Dubuque's salaries including only nine performance points should compare favorably with other districts. This would ensure that those Dubuque administrators who ranked high on performance would be paid a salary higher than most administrators in similar positions. Studies have verified this to be the case. Some of the Dubuque administrators are paid the highest salaries for similar positions from among the fifteen largest schools in Iowa. Performance ratings have made this possible.

Changing to the New Salary System

Since the study was being undertaken during the 1969-70 year, the salaries for that year provided the basis for establishing initial salaries under the performance system. The task was to distribute the points among the five factors composing the performance appraisal system in such a manner that the individual salaries would most nearly equal those of the existing 1969-70 salaries. Using a value of $100.00 for each point, a process of adjusting the number of points among the five factors through trial-and-error was applied until the combined individual salaries based on the new system "best-fit" the existing salaries. The performance factor was held constant for all persons while determining the "best-fit." It therefore became a variable which, once the performance appraisal system became operational, would cause salaries to fluctuate upward or downward in relation to the performance of the individual.

In determining the "best-fit" of existing salaries to those of the new system, there were individuals whose salaries were higher on the new system

and also some salaries which fell below current salaries. The board of education had determined that no one would receive a deduction in salary and so those with salaries below the existing system were given an "adjustment" which raised their performance salary to equal their existing salary. This dollar adjustment will continue to be added to the formula salary so long as the individual remains in his current position in the Dubuque Community School District. Thirteen individuals received adjustments which ranged from $75 to $1,400. The average was $376 and the median was $308.

The majority of administrators gained in salary through adopting the performance system. The board of education ruled that the increases, irrespective of how large, would be granted. Otherwise, the system could not prove itself because it would not be functioning according to the formula. Of the thirty-six administrators involved in the "best-fit" procedure, the salaries of twenty-three were higher than the existing 1969-70 salaries. The higher amounts ranged from $1.00 to $1,295. Adding together both the higher salaries and the adjustments for the lower salaries, the performance system, excluding the performance factor, would have involved an additional 4.0% in administrative salaries in 1969-70 had it been adopted that year. When the performance system was adopted for the 1970-71 contract year, the point value was increased from $100 to $106 and the performance appraisal factor was implemented. Please refer to the table on page 14 for a summary of comparisons of the performance system for each of the four years it has been in effect in Dubuque.

Administrative Positions Included in Performance Appraisal

Six classifications of administrators were originally included in the performance appraisal salary system. A total of thirty-eight (38)

administrators were involved. Through a restructuring of the administrative organization in 1971-72 the number was reduced to thirty (30) and the closing of an elementary school for 1973-74 will further reduce the number to twenty-eight and one-half (28½). However, the system is being broadened for 1973-74 to include a new level of administration. Seven (7) additional positions will be added.

The Appraisal Procedure

The appraisal procedure is based on management by objective. There are three levels of evaluators. They are:

Primary Evaluator - Person having the greatest input into the performance appraisal of an administrator. This is the person to whom the administrator is directly responsible.

Secondary Evaluator - Person having input into the performance appraisal to the degree of being included in the evaluation conferences (discussed below).

Indirect Evaluator - Person who has input into the performance appraisal but who will not sit in the evaluation conferences except in very special cases. The input of an indirect evaluator will be presented in an evaluation conference by one of the primary evaluators.

The primary evaluators include the superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of elementary education, director of secondary education, and the principal in the case of assistant principal's evaluation. Secondary evaluators include principals and directors of education if some working relationship exists. Indirect evaluators include the director of personnel and the director of business affairs.

The calendar for the appraisal procedure is as follows:

September 15	- Goals and objectives are to be turned into the primary evaluator.
September 15 to October 15	- Conferences involving administrators and their primary evaluators regarding goals and objectives for the year. (one hour in length)
December 1 and April 15	- Self-evaluations are to be turned into primary evaluator.
May 1 to June 10	- Individual evaluation conferences including primary evaluators, superintendent, and assistant superintendent. (one and one-half to two hours in length)

Administrative Goals and Objectives - The basic principle underlying the goals and objectives is that the statements shall be brief, understandable, free of textbook cliches, but yet sufficiently comprehensive to provide specific direction to teachers and administrators who must carry them out. The format includes the goal which is broad in scope so as to encompass all of the administrative operations within the particular area of discussion. The discussion section is to provide a very brief sketch of the writer's personal beliefs and feelings regarding the topic of the goal.

The objectives are specific tasks involving many levels of administration which are to be accomplished during varying periods of time. The time periods are:

(1) Immediate objectives--to be accomplished within the current school year.

(2) Near-future objectives--to be accomplished within 1-2 years.

(3) Long-range objectives--to be accomplished within 3-5 years.

The goals will serve to provide the superintendent with an instrument through which the direction of the administration of the Dubuque Community

School District is proceeding. The objectives will serve a similar function for the superintendent to evaluate the performance of individual administrators in proceeding toward accomplishment of the goals.

Self-Evaluation - The forms used in the self-evaluation are found on pages 15 and 16.

Evaluation Conference - The evaluation conference is conducted by the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and the primary evaluator. During the conference, progress on the goals and objectives is discussed as well as other topics which are a part of the responsibility of the administrator. A written report is submitted to the evaluee discussing both areas of strength and areas where improvement is expected. The performance points are set at the conclusion of the conference and relayed to the administrator.

Additions to Performance System in 1973-74 - The seven (7) new administrative positions which are to be added to the performance system in 1973-74 will add a new dimension to the system. Heretofore the administrators have held positions in which they either report directly to or worked closely with the central office staff who hold the primary responsibility for evaluation. The new positions involve high school administrators. The position title is Division Advisor. Each division advisor is basically responsible for a segment of the student body and teaching staff. The positions involve responsibilities often delegated to assistant principals.

The division advisors will hold fourth-level administrative positions and as such will not have a great deal of contact with the central office evaluators. Therefore, the building principals must be primarily responsible

for evaluating the division advisors. In other words, a person whose performance is evaluated (a high school principal) will, for the first time, be evaluating the performance of other administrators.

An outline of the division advisors performance system is found on page 13. These are entry positions into administration and therefore it was felt that limitations should be fixed at a level below other performance administrative positions. However, the dollar value of the point coincides with the original system thereby eliminating the need to devote additional time to setting two point values.

Confidentiality of Performance Rankings

One unusual aspect of Dubuque's performance salary system is the extent to which the salaries of individual performance administrators are not reported to the public. In fact the performance ratings are not reported to the board of education.

During the original developmental stage of the performance salary system it was necessary to work closely with the board of education on all aspects of the system. In one report, the board of education was given the performance rankings by individual. A copy of this report was accidentally left in the board conference room and it was discovered the following day by a principal during a meeting of all principals. Immediately the performance ratings were known and the system barely escaped complete collapse.

From that experience extreme precautions have been developed to ensure the confidentiality of the performance rankings. We first approached the news media and explained the system and the need for withholding publication of salaries by individual. To date we have had one hundred percent cooperation.

We do report the total dollars and percentage increase of performance administrators salaries to the news media and this is reported to the public. Iowa law requires publication of individual salaries but the I.R.S. W-2 salaries and not contract salaries are published.

The administrators involved with the performance system declared early in the developmental stages that the evaluation must be done by their administrative superiors and not the board of education. The board readily concurred and to prevent any misunderstanding, the board has delegated full freedom to the superintendent to set the performance ranking and no report has been requested by the board on performance rankings of individuals.

Summary

Although the performance-based salary concept has been in operation for three years, it is still considered to be in a developmental stage. There are some involved with the system who would like to retain the system but eliminate the performance factor. It has been brought out that the performance appraisal system has tended to inhibit free flow of information among principals. On the other hand, there are those who are well satisfied with the performance system and feel it provides an opportunity to be compensated for being industrious and innovative. The major obstacle to overcome is not the mechanics of a performance-based salary system but the psychological reactions of the individuals involved. No system of evaluating human performance is perfect. It's a matter of the individuals involved accepting its imperfections and recognizing its advantages.

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL
ADMINISTRATIVE SALARY SYSTEM
1973-1974

I. Factors Included in Salary Determination

1. Contract Length
2. Professional Training
3. Administrative Experience
4. Administrative Responsibilities
5. Performance

II. Point System: 1 Point = $118

Positions:	III. Contract Length Months	Points	IV. Admin. Respon. Points
H. S. Principal	11½	118	52
Asst. H. S. Principal	11	112	31
Jr. High Principal			
Over 800 students	11¼	115	40
Under 800 students	11¼	115	35
Asst. Jr. High Principal			
Washington	10½	106	22
Washington Annex	10¼	103	22
Jefferson	10¼	103	19
Elementary Principal	10½	106	31
Academic Coordinators			
Group A	10½	106	22
Group B	11	112	22

V. Professional Training Points		VI. Administrative Experience Years	Points	VII. Performance Appraisal Points
B.A.	= -11	0	-5	0
B.A.+15	= - 8	1	-3	3
M.A.	= 0	2	-2	6
M.A.+15	= + 2	3	0	9
M.A.+30	= + 4			12
M.A.+45	= + 6			15
Ph.D.	= + 8			18
				21
				24
				27
				30
				(no limit)

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL
ADMINISTRATIVE SALARY SYSTEM
for
DIVISION ADVISORS
1973-1974

I. Factors Included in Salary Determination:

1. Contract Length
2. Administrative Responsibilities
3. Professional Training
4. Administrative Experience
5. Performance

II. Point System: 1 Point = $118

III. Contract Length

Months	Points
10	100
10¼	103
10½	106
11	112
11¼	115
11½	118

IV. Admin. Responsibilities

Points
22

V. Professional Training

Points	
B.A.	= -11
B.A.+15	= - 8
M.A.	= + 0
M.A.+15	= + 2
M.A.+30	= + 4
M.A.+45	= + 6
Ph.D.	= + 8

VI. Administrative Experience

Years	Points
0	-5
1	-3
2	-2
3	0

VII. Performance Appraisal

Points
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
(top)

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DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
FOUR-YEAR ANALYSIS
ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SALARY SYSTEM

	Total No. of Points	$ Value of Point	Formula Dollars	Total Salary Cost	Percent of Total Salaries
1. Contract					
70-71 N=38	4040	106	$428,240	$582,721	73.5%
71-72 N=30	3252	109	$354,468	$495,997	71.5%
72-73 N=30	3255	113	$367,815	$521,849	70.5%
73-74 N=29	3081	118	$363,558	$523,503	69.4%
2. Responsibility					
70-71	1047	106	110,982	582,721	19.0%
71-72	877	109	95,593	495,997	19.3%
72-73	877	113	99,101	521,849	19.0%
73-74	844	118	99,592	523,503	19.0%
3. Education					
70-71	-38	106	-4,028	582,721	-.7%
71-72	24	109	2,616	495,997	.5%
72-73	26	113	2,938	521,849	.6%
73-74	31	118	3,658	523,503	.7%
4. Experience					
70-71	-17	106	-1,802	582,721	-.3%
71-72	-19	109	-2,071	495,997	-.4%
72-73	-12	113	-1,356	521,849	-.2%
73-74	-9	118	-1,062	523,503	-.2%
5. Performance					
70-71	399	106	42,294	582,721	7.3%
71-72	384	109	41,856	495,997	8.4%
72-73	432	113	48,816	521,849	9.3%
73-74	454.5	118	53,631	523,503	10.3%
6. Adjust. & Longevity					
70-71	—	—	7,035	582,721	1.2%
71-72	—	—	3,535	495,997	.7%
72-73	—	—	4,535	521,849	.9%
73-74	—	—	4,126	523,503	.8%
7. TOTALS					
70-71	5431		$582,721		100.0%
71-72	4518		$495,997		
72-73	4578		$521,849		
73-74	4401.5		$523,503		

July, 1973

Name of person evaluating self _____

SELF APPRAISAL INSTRUMENT

	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfacto
1. Administration			
A. Make plans carefully and adequately			
B. Alert to recognize or devise useful innovations			
C. Do a good job of systematizing and coordinating units of work			
D. Essential work of the school/department is done on time			
2. Supervision			
A. Guide staff into a unit with clearly recognized goals			
B. Inspire staff to independent creative work			
C. Have knowledge of pertinent details of the staffs' work			
D. Available to counsel and assist staff			
E. Just and considerate in disciplining staff			
3. Relationship			
A. Compliment and thank the staff appropriately and sincerely			
B. Possess insight into problems encountered by staff			
C. Honest and dependable in dealings with staff			
D. Have positive influence on morale of the staff			
E. Promote good public relations			
4. Personal Qualities			
A. Emotionally poised and calm			
B. Adequate self confidence			
C. Welcome differences in viewpoint			
D. Work hard			
E. Welcome additional responsibilities			
5. Professional Qualities			
A. Possess general knowledge			
B. Possess specific knowledge in own field			
C. Attempt to orientate work to society at large			
D. Team work: Conform to purpose of plans of the district			
E. Make an effort to be professionally alert and informed			

SELF APPRAISAL

Anecdotal progress report of objectives in relationship tc stated goals

1. Brief statement of goal:

2. Progress report:

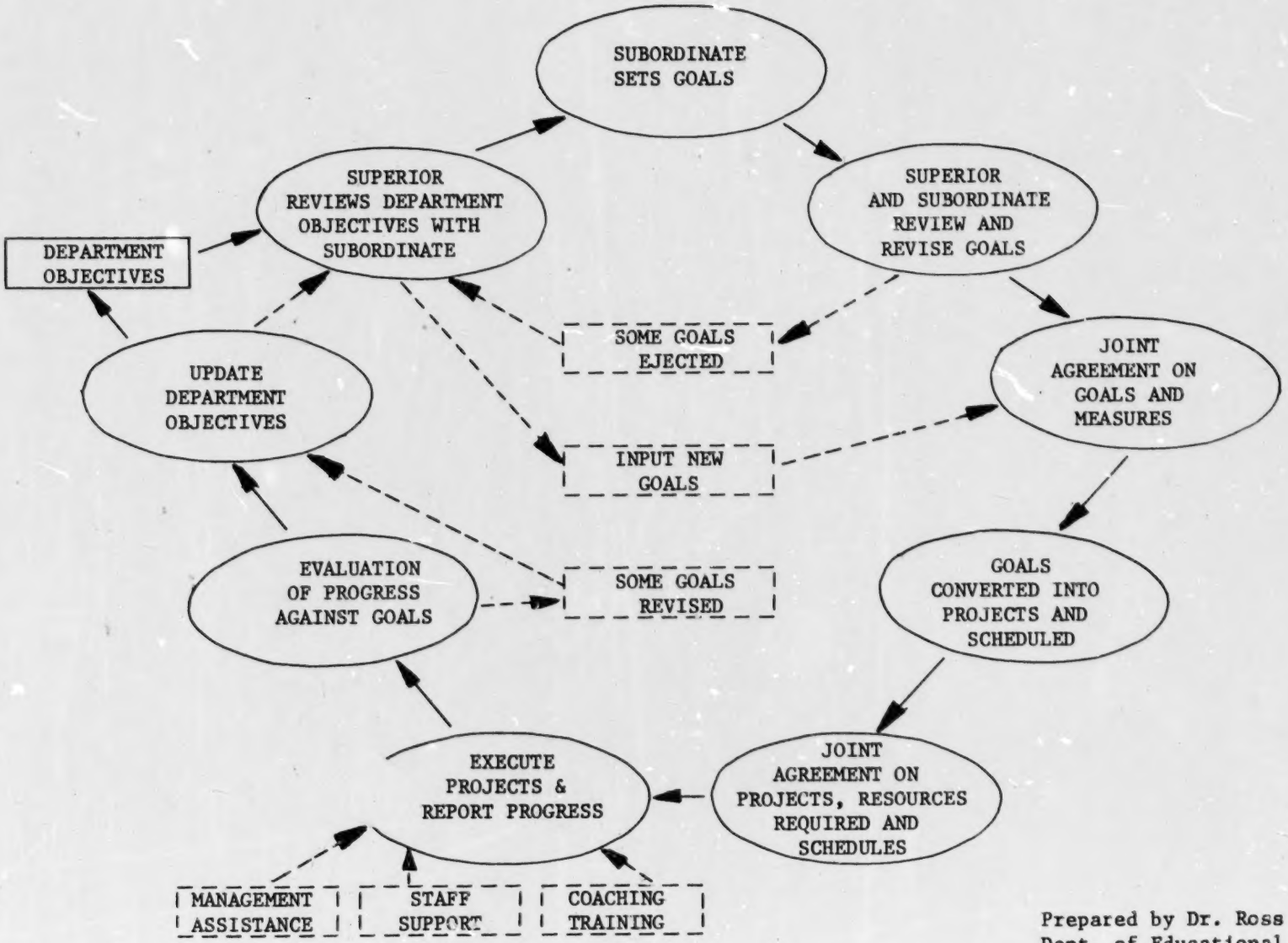
Goal Performance Scale (circle one)

X - Circumstances prevent progress toward goal.

1. Little or no progress made toward goal.
2. Less than expected progress made toward goal.
3. Average progress in achieving goal.
4. High degree of success in achieving goal.
5. Very high success in achieving goal.

HOW TO ESTABLISH A MANAGEMENT-BY-OBJECTIVES PROGRAM

THE GOAL PROJECT CYCLE


SUBORDINATE SETS GOALS
SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE REVIEW AND REVISE GOALS
JOINT AGREEMENT ON GOALS AND MEASURES
GOALS CONVERTED INTO PROJECTS AND SCHEDULED
JOINT AGREEMENT ON PROJECTS, RESOURCES REQUIRED AND SCHEDULES
EXECUTE PROJECTS & REPORT PROGRESS
EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AGAINST GOALS
UPDATE DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES
SUPERIOR REVIEWS DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES WITH SUBORDINATE
DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES
SOME GOALS EJECTED
INPUT NEW GOALS
SOME GOALS REVISED
MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE
STAFF SUPPORT
COACHING TRAINING

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